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RECREATION NEWSLETTER

October 1940

Dear Fellow Workers:

The Recreation Congress is still a vivid memory with its crowds, its laughter and singing, its stirring up and turning over of ideas and its occasional clash of terminology or beliefs. I want to share it with those of you who could not attend.

Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken made a cogent plea for play's own sake. G. Ott Romney presented present-day goals in recreation and the problems we face in attaining them, especially those created by the movement of people involved in the defense program.

The singing was, as usual, an outstanding feature of the Congress. Mr. Zanzig introduced his new Singing America (see page 5), and Walking at Night became the theme song of the week with Shuckin' of the Corn a close second.

It would be interesting to know what the other Extension Service representatives who were there from nine States would select as outstanding points. These are two that I have continued to ponder:

1. The defense program is going to create problems everywhere but especially in the small cities and towns where camps and industries are being located. Large numbers of unattached men will be brought together in places where there are few facilities to serve them in their leisure time. Families will come in with the men who are to work in industrial plants. Questions that rise over and over are "What preparations can we make to accept these newcomers?" "What will this influx mean to our small-town boys and girls?" "How can the agencies in the rural field be of most help?" "How can adequate facilities and leadership for recreation programs be financed?"

2. Time is bringing evident changes. The line between urban and rural culture is becoming rapidly less easily defined. What difference is this making in the leisure-time pursuits of rural people? Are we too prone to talk glowingly of the good old days and to attempt to keep alive the activities of the past instead of seeking the same values in their current expression? As people of rural stock we have a heritage of community interdependence, family unity, and individual independence, qualities that may find many forms of expression in the community and family life of today if we who guide people and help them to create opportunities

for themselves are aware of fundamentals. How much do we evaluate our projects and programs? How soundly do we plan?

Oglebay Park

A week-end visit was paid to Oglebay Park near Wheeling, where Jane Farwell, the new recreation specialist on the West Virginia Extension Staff, was my guide and mentor. The Park has made great progress in the last 5 years, bringing into existence many of the plans that were made for it in its early days.

A well-managed social dance, largely attended by high-school students and directed by a junior high-school principal, is part of every Saturday-night program. The orchestra that has come into existence at the Park played most professionally, and a volunteer dance team put on a creditable floor show the night I was there. The dance competes very successfully with the roadhouses in the section for the high-school trade.

The Wednesday-night program includes a full evening of square dances.

As part of a radio broadcast, M. Stecker, the music specialist at the Park, used Victor Record No. 26357, a test in musical ability. All of us in the studio took the test and enjoyed deciding whether tunes and tones were changed in one way or another. Mr. Stecker said he had used these tests with great success in camps, and with service clubs and other adult and juvenile groups.

At the Mattress Centers

Potluck dinners, community singing, games for the children, "neon-hour fellowship," health instruction, special ice-cream treats, and other social and educational features have been added to the mattress making in Arkansas and Mississippi. The same things probably go on in other States also. The promotion of neighborliness and the direction of singing and relaxing games have been undertaken by the recreation leaders of the home demonstration clubs in many of the centers.

Folklore in Texas

Beginning January first, W. A. Owen, a Texas folklorist, will direct a State-wide folk-festival program under the extension division of the University of Texas. The objectives of the program are: 1. To hold playdays for Texas school children. 2. To gather Texas games, stories, dances, and ballads. 3. To encourage local folk festivals. 4. To establish an annual State folk festival.

4-H Music for Radio Programs

The RCA Manufacturing Co., which makes Victor records has granted permission to all radio stations to use recordings of "Dreaming," "The Ploughing Song," and "Pride o' the Land."

"Christmas Is Coming"

Christmas Carols we love to sing, published by Theo Presser, 1712 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, is a good, inexpensive collection of carols.

There are some less familiar carols in "Singing America" that is listed on page 5.

Christmas Carols and Folk Songs collected and arranged by the faculty and students of the College of Education, University of Minnesota, published by Schmett Music Co., Minneapolis, is an excellent book of familiar and unfamiliar carols well arranged for part singing.

Both Prudential (Newark, N. J.), and Hancock (Boston, Mass.) Life Insurance Companies publish small, free song booklets that include Christmas carols. The former has many patriotic, popular, and old songs without tunes in "Songs," and the latter has carols only and gives the music with them.

The simple dramatization of the Christmas story from the Bible that has been distributed through this office is still available free of charge. The National Recreation Association also has Christmas drama and music available.

Echoes of the Christmas Song, by Susan Welty, that appeared in Woman's Press, (v. 33, no. 11, pp. 506-507 Dec. 1939), is a ceremonial of gift bringing based on the customs of various nations, and using carols.

Plays for High Holidays, With Incidental Music and Dancing, by Janet E. Tobitt and Alice M. G. White 141 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., 1939), is a delightful volume of four full-length plays, two for Christmas and two for Easter. The Star of Bethlehem, a French play, is printed in English for the first time. The other Christmas play, The Blessing of King Wenceslaus, is woven around the well-loved carol about this good monarch. The carol is one of the six songs used in the attractive tale. Notes are given for interpretation, production, sound effects, settings, and costumes.

From the States

Dixie Troubadours, a musical entertainment based on the melodies of Stephen C. Foster, Arranged by June Donahue. 6 pp. Ext. Serv., Little Rock, Ark., 1940. A practical festival planned to grow out of a year of club work on Stephen Foster's songs.

Ceremony of the Flame, for home demonstration clubs. 3 pp. Ext. Serv., Little Rock, Ark., 1940. A brief ceremonial using 4-H songs.

Musical Moments From Latin America. By Fannie Buchanan, 29 pp. Iowa State Col. Ext., Ames, 1940. A home study course for Iowa home-project and 4-H Club members. It is based on Spanish, Mexican, Indian, and other South American music with suggestions for singing and dancing as well as ideas for use in planning a fiesta.

Citizens in a Democracy. By Jewell Garland, 13 pp. Miss. State Col. Ext. mimiogr., State College. 1940. A patriotic pageant with script and production notes.

Farming as a Way of Life in Mississippi. By Jewell Garland. 33 pp. Miss. State Col. Ext. mimeogr., State College. 1940. A historical presentation of life in Mississippi. Slides are used to amplify the episodes.

Staging Magic Cotton, a pageant in three scenes. By Mary L. Collings. 7 pp. La. Agr. Ext., University. 1940. "To be presented by civic groups and participated in by local people for the purpose of stimulating increased use of cotton in southern homes."

Camp Cookery. Wash. State Col. Ext., Fullman. 1940. What to have and how to fix it.

Plays for Reading, together with a list of books of interest to the amateur in the field of the theater has been compiled by the Traveling Library Department, Wisconsin Free Library Commission and the Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, 19 pp. 1940. A brief discussion of ways of making group playreading effective and an annotated list of plays.

From the Magazines

Home Economics Plays. Practical Home Economics, vol. 18, no. 1. 468 Fourth Avenue, New York. January 1940. About two dozen plays are listed on the back cover page.

Wise Investment of Leisure. Edward J. Stiegletz. Scientific Monthly, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 147-157. August 1940. An argument for educating children for the satisfying use of their leisure as adults.

Family Life in a Rural Community. By Frank D. Alexander. Social Forces, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 392-405. March 1940. A report of a study of a rural community in McNairy County, Tenn. It describes a community having a large majority of tenants, a fairly large number of owners of small farms, and a very few Negroes in a section where cotton is the chief crop. The economic, religious, recreational, and social characteristics are discussed.

Community Health Education. Ira V. Hiscock. American Journal of Public Health, vol. 30 no. 5, pp. 516-522. May 1940. A discussion of broad objectives in a health program involving the participation of the individual not only as one interested in his own well-being but also as a citizen.

The Radio and Rural Research. F. Howard Forsyth, Rural Sociology, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 67-77. March 1939. A discussion of the place that the radio may play in changing some folk ways in rural recreation through reducing rural-urban social distances, reorganizing farmers' use of time, and changing the life of farm women. The author claims, however, that rural listeners differ from urban ones in regard to the dialog and music they want.

Educating for Maturity, H. A. Overstreet. *Journal of Adult Education*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 117-122. April 1940. A clear presentation and analysis of various theories about people. Dr. Overstreet discusses the development of self-reliance and social-mindedness as essential to maturity.

Outdoor Fireplaces. How to construct them. *House Beautiful*, vol. 82, no. 7, pp. 38-39, 83-85. June 1940. Diagrams for building one simple fireplace and several elaborate ones, and advice on what to cook outdoors.

Fun at Home. It's a big part of the answer to almost any adolescent problem. Gladys Denny Schultz. *Better Homes & Gardens*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 46-47, 58-59. December 1939. A discussion of the problem of keeping adolescents at home and how to make entertaining there attractive and satisfying to them.

Problems of Farm Youth - A Point of View. Paul H. Landis. *Social Forces*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 502-513. May 1940. A provocative discussion of farm youth and its problems.

Inexpensive Books and Bulletins

Unveiling the Future. National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. A bulletin describing various methods of fortune telling.

Posture and Body Mechanics. Loraine Frost, Dept. Phys. Ed. for Women, State Univ. Iowa Bul. no. 479, 23 pp., Iowa City. March 1, 1940. An excellent discussion of good body mechanics, their importance and means of achievement. Exercises and a posture test are included.

Children's Parties. By Patricia Dubber, Washington Service Bureau, 1013 - Thirteenth Street, NW, Washington, D. C. One of a series of practical booklets giving suggestions for party themes, indoor and outdoor games. Other titles are "Book of Games," "Party Book," and "Fortune Telling."

Singing America. Edited by A. D. Zanzig. Published by C. C. Birchard & Co., Boston, Mass., 1940. An excellent book of singable folk songs, ballads, rounds, and carols. A "composers' corner" of more difficult songs will pleasantly carry many a singing group a little farther than they knew they could go.

One Dollar or Less. E. A. Lathrop. U. S. Off. Ed. Fam. 88, 16 pp., Supt. Docs., Govt. Ptg. Off., Washington, D. C. 1940. A guide to good books selling for a dollar or less.

By Way of Introduction. American Library Association, 130 pp. 520 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 1938. An excellent annotated list of books for young people.

Books Costing \$1 or More

The Fun Encyclopedia. E. O. Harbin. 1008 pp. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 1940. A practical, well-organized collection of active and quiet games, songs, and ideas for parties, picnics, banquets, and other social occasions for different types of groups. Chapters on dramatics, magic, puppets, and leadership techniques are included also. The book is written by a man who has tried out the things he talks about and knows whereof he speaks.

America Learns to Play. A history of popular recreation 1607 - 1940. Foster Rhea Dulles. 441 pp. D. Appleton-Century Co., N. Y. 1940. A cleverly written fully annotated history of recreation since its early days in this country.

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Bread. By Boyd Shafer and Carol L. Shafer. 207 pp. Columbia University Press, New York, 1940. An unusual presentation of the fundamental problems found in every community that is at all aware of its social needs. The social-worker wife in letters to her husband, a teacher of social sciences, asks questions based on the problems of persons who have come to her attention in the course of her work in a county relief office - questions about unemployment, low income, old age, broken homes, and health care. The answers carry on a realistic discussion with a basis of social principles that are sound, if somewhat academic.

The purpose of the book is summed up by the husband when he says, "Social scientists too often view humanity only in the abstract. Social workers too often see it only in the personal. Together we can reach a truer, more satisfactory view."

Program Peps. Published by Youth Service, Inc., Peekskill, N. Y. A small new monthly bulletin listing and describing inexpensive and free bulletins, maps, reports, and services available through public and private agencies. About 90 items will be reviewed in each issue.

Group Education for a Democracy. William Heard Kilpatrick. 232 pp. Associated Press, N. Y. 1940. A collection of essays urging the examination of means and goals in group education.

She's Off to College. Gulielma Fell Alsop and Mary F. McBride. Vanguard Press. A guide for freshmen that will help them to adjust to a new environment. This is not an etiquette book. It deals with time management, health, social and service opportunities, friendships and other vital phases of school life.

The Questions Girls Ask. Helen Welshimer. 128 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., N. Y. 1939. Answers to 67 questions that high-school girls ask concerning dates, popularity, and appearance.

Many conferences of various kinds lie immediately ahead. I hope they will offer opportunities to visit with some of you.

Cordially yours,

Ella Gardner,
Recreation Specialist.

